



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gonzales, Cooper Named National Coaches of the Year

TOPEKA, Kan. — Manhattan High School’s Robert Gonzales and Hoisington High School’s Bruce Cooper have been selected as 2017 National Coaches of the Year by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Coaches Association.

Leading the Manhattan Indians wrestling squad to a 6A State Championship in 2017, Gonzales hoisted his third state title as a head coach. A 40-year head coaching career has accumulated a record of 317 wins and 133 losses. Gonzales has fingerprints on the leadership of wrestling throughout the state of Kansas and also the nation. The leader of the Indians has served on numerous state and national committees during his time around the mat.

In 2017, the Indians crowned two state champions individually and also captured two runners-up in the path to their state title at Hartman Arena.

Gonzales has been named the Kansas Wrestling Coach Association (KWCA) Coach of the Year six times, while being named the City of Topeka Coach of the Year nine times.

Bruce Cooper has coached golf for 38 years, most recently at Hoisington High School. His girls team this past fall placed third at the 3-2-1A State Championship. During Cooper’s career he has claimed 16 state or regional championships coaching the students on the links.

Named the 2017 Kansas Coaches Association Coach of the Year for girls golf, Cooper was also named the NFCA Girls Golf Outstanding Coach in Kansas in 1986. In addition to coaching golf, he also has coached football and basketball during his career.

This is the 33rd and 34th time a Kansan has been selected as Coach of the Year by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Coaches Association.

The NFHS, which has been recognizing coaches through an awards program since 1982, honors coaches in the top 10 girls sports and top 10 boys sports (by participation numbers), and in one “other” sport that is not included in the top 10 listings. Winners of NFHS awards must be active coaches during the year for which they receive their award.

The KSHSAA works with the Kansas Coaches Association (KCA) to nominate Kansas coaches. The KCA contacts their potential state award recipients to complete a “coach profile” form that requests information regarding the coach’s record, membership in and affiliation with coaching and other professional organizations, involvement with other school and community activities and programs, and coaching philosophy. To be approved as an NFCA award recipient and considered for sectional and national coach of the year, this profile form must be completed by the coach or designee and then approved by the executive director (or designee) of the state athletic/activities association.

Gonzales and Cooper received this national accolade after first being awarded state and sectional awards. Other sectional and state coaches of the year from Kansas will be announced at a later date. The NFHS is divided into eight geographical sections with Kansas part of Section 5 - Midwest (KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, SD).

The NFHS Coaches Association has an advisory committee, composed of a chair and eight sectional representatives. The sectional committee representatives evaluate the state award recipients and select the best candidates for the sectional award in each sport category. The NFHS Coaches Association Advisory Committee then considers the sectional candidates in each sport, ranks them according to a point system, and determines a national winner for each of the 20 sport categories, the spirit category and one “other” category.

About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and performing arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and performing arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 16 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,000 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.7 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; offers online publications and services for high school coaches and officials; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, speech and debate coaches, and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS Web site at www.nfhs.org.